



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND FIREARMS

ATF is a law enforcement organization within the United States Department of the Treasury with unique responsibilities dedicated to protecting the public, reducing violent crime, and collecting revenue. ATF enforces the Federal laws and regulations relating to alcohol, tobacco products, firearms, explosives and arson by working directly and in cooperation with others to:

- Suppress and prevent crime and violence through enforcement, regulation, and community outreach.
- Ensure fair and effective revenue collection and industry regulation.
- Support and assist Federal, State, local and international law enforcement.
- Provide innovative training programs in support of enforcement and regulatory functions.

ATF's jurisdiction and specialized expertise applied through enforcement, regulation, and community outreach is uniquely valuable to the public particularly through its impact on firearms and explosives-related violence.

- **ATF's Arson and Explosives Task Forces** provide vital resources to local communities in the wake of arson and explosives incidents. **Arson:** During the period 1989-1996, ATF forwarded **1,792 arson cases**, with **3,480 defendants** for prosecution. During FY-96, ATF forwarded **202 arson cases** with **450 defendants** for prosecution. **Explosives:** During the period 1989-1996, ATF forwarded **1,819 explosives cases** with **3,116 defendants** for prosecution. During FY-96, ATF forwarded **196 explosives cases** with **315 defendants** for prosecution. Approximately **\$29.8 million** was saved in insurance dollars as a result. In addition, during FY-96, ATF's **Cause and Origin Program** was responsible for investigating **1,922** fire related incidents where **188** people had been killed, **516** injured and **\$391.4 million** was incurred in property damage.
- ATF's **Achilles Program** concentrates on the enforcement of Federal firearms laws that provide mandatory prison sentences for armed drug traffickers and career criminals. Achilles removes the most violent criminals from our communities for what can amount to the remainder of their crime producing lives. **As of December 1996, 5,275 armed drug traffickers or individuals who utilize a firearm during the commission of a Federal crime of violence** have been sentenced to more than **31,738 years**. At the same time, **1,888** armed career criminals have been sentenced to more than **33,602 years** and **41 life sentences**. Based on a study conducted in 1991 (Protecting America), ATF has determined that the armed career criminal commits an average of **160 violent crimes per year**, at a cost of over **\$2,600 per crime**. **Sentencing of these criminals has prevented over 1.3 million crimes, representing a savings of over \$3.2 billion to potential victims.**
- **Criminal Firearms Trafficking** - No other agency features the interdependent assets which together make ATF most effective in addressing criminal firearms trafficking. The assets are: investigative expertise, ATF-exclusive information, technical/forensic services, specialized training, and public/industry education.
- The **National Tracing Center** is the only organization of its kind in the U.S. It assists State and local law enforcement agencies in solving violent crimes. Through innovation in technology, the Center has substantially reduced the time it takes to conduct a firearms trace. Before 1994, the average firearms tracer conducted **1,000** traces per year. In 1994, increased productivity brought the average annual tracing rate to **2,500**. Approximately **79,000** traces were conducted in 1995, while over **116,000** traces were completed in 1996.
- ATF's **Juvenile Firearms Violence Initiative** works to identify sources of juvenile firearms and shut down traffickers who acquire and provide guns to juveniles.
- ATF's **Firearms Licensing Program** joins with State and local authorities to ensure that Federal firearms licensees (FFLs) operate in compliance with Federal, State, and local laws. In 1994, a Presidential memorandum and the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act, resulted in enhanced licensing requirements which reduced the number of FFLs to **124,286 (as of 12/31/96)**. In addition, a GAO audit in 1996 found that "ATF has no policy to reduce the number of dealers to a targeted number."
- ATF protects the consumer by enforcing the **Federal Alcohol Administration Act** to ensure market and product integrity of alcoholic beverages and the **Explosives Control Act of 1970** to ensure the safe storage of explosive materials.
- **G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training)** is designed to decrease gang violence across our nation. The curriculum is taught by trained, uniformed police officers and ATF agents to 7th graders. As of January of this year, over **2,260 police officers** from more than **900 law enforcement agencies** were trained as G.R.E.A.T. instructors. Since 1991, more than **1 million school children in 48 states, 3 countries, and 3 provinces** will have participated in the program by the end of the year.

ATF "Pays Its Own Way" through effective tax collection, regulation, and enforcement.

- In FY-96, with a budget of approximately **\$400 million**, ATF brought in over **\$12 billion** in revenue.
- ATF also assessed approximately **\$2.7 million** in excise taxes on products (alcohol beverage and tobacco) diverted from original destinations.

ATF is known for establishing cooperative working relationships.

- ATF works effectively through **task forces** with other Federal, State and local agencies. Cases are developed for prosecution in whatever jurisdiction is most appropriate -- Federal or State.
- The National Drug Information Center (NDIC) has released a preliminary report on its national symposium on street gangs that states, "A number of the symposium participants view the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) as the **most productive (and cooperative) Federal law enforcement agency working street gang matters with State and local law enforcement**."
- A prime example of our work with another Federal agency was our cooperative effort with the FBI to solve the **World Trade Center** and the **Murrah Federal Building** bombings.
- ATF sponsors industry seminars to communicate with and solicit the unique concerns of all and develop team approaches to resolving existing problems. This approach is being used by ATF as it leads the explosives study mandated by Congress in the 1996 Anti-Terrorism Legislation. Currently ATF is involved in a study to determine the effectiveness of using taggants for the purpose of detection and identification of explosive materials.

ATF advances new and innovative methods to increase productivity and effectiveness.

- ATF's **Forensic and Technical Services** provide services and specialized expertise in the areas of alcohol, firearms, explosives, and arson that no other agency provides.
- ATF's **CEASEFIRE Initiative** utilizes new ballistic identification technology. It solves more crimes through innovation and partnerships with State and local law enforcement.
- ATF's **Canine Detection Program** has successfully developed a method of training canines to detect explosives, fire accelerants, and spent cartridge cases.
- ATF is electronically linking its services with its nationwide users. Links from local police departments and certain manufacturers to the ATF National Tracing Center is increasing the speed and efficiency of firearms traces.
- ATF's **Bomb Research Project** is yielding important information relative to the explosive signature, blast effect, postblast problems, debris distance, and residue retrieval.
- ATF's 4 **National Response Teams (NRTs)** can respond within **24 hours** to suspected bombing and arson scenes in the U.S. The teams combine agents, explosives specialists, forensic scientists, and technical specialists. At arson scenes, ATF also deploys cause and origin specialists, specially trained canines and auditors. ATF's **International Response Teams (IRT)**, formed as a result of an agreement with the State Department, has been deployed 11 times in countries such as Peru, Argentina, and Pakistan.
- ATF is advancing the use of **computerized fire modeling** to calculate the physics of a fire and how a fire functions. A relatively new tool to law enforcement, computer modeling has proved successful in the courtroom to verify witness testimony.
- In response to a Congressional mandate in the 1997 Omnibus Consolidation Appropriations Act, the Treasury Department has authorized ATF to establish a national repository of information on incidents involving arson and explosives.

ATF receives highest rating by Inspector General.

- For the period ending September 30, 1995, a Treasury IG audit found ATF to have a strong financial internal control structure and a good record for complying with laws and regulations.